



SUMMER 2002

Louisiana COASTLINES

LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Presenting—Official Louisiana Coastal Zone Map 2002



The coastline formed by the Mississippi River has changed more often than any other coastline in the United States over the past 5,000 years.

Compare the last printed black and white 1995 edition of the Louisiana Coastal Zone Map to the new, completely updated, digitally-mastered, 72-layer, full-color Coastal Zone Map 2002, and there is an eye-popping experience.

Paint a picture of large open bays and lakes, barrier islands, cheniers, and natural forests and add beautiful marshes, swamps, and bottomland hardwoods that sprawl inland from the Gulf of Mexico and there you have 7.9 million acres of some of the most important ecosystems in the world.

The state's coastal zone boundaries contain all or part of nineteen parishes. From the west at the Texas/Louisiana state line, the boundary proceeds easterly through the parishes of Calcasieu and Cameron, then goes south through Vermilion, Iberia, St. Mary, St. Martin, Assumption, Terrebonne and Lafourche. The boundary goes north to include the parishes of St. Charles, St. John the Baptist, St. James and then goes east again through Livingston, Tangipahoa

and St. Tammany parishes to the Mississippi state line. Seven parishes lie completely within the coastal zone. Those parishes are Orleans, Jefferson, St. Bernard, Plaquemines, St. John the Baptist, St. James, and St. Charles.

Working with GIS and cartographic experts at the Louisiana Geological Survey, the state Department of Natural Resources' Coastal Management Division has recently designed, produced and printed 4,000 copies of the state's coastal zone boundary map. CMD Project Manager Steve Chustz said the new full-color map shows the coastline as it is today with vital data not available on other printed maps. He said the information is presented on a larger scale and is greatly enhanced over the 1995 edition.

Free copies of the map are available to the public by contacting CMD at 1- 800-267-4019. A limited supply of the coastal zone maps are also available without charge at one of the five Permit Information Centers located in Cameron, Jefferson, Lafourche, Plaquemines and Terrebonne parishes. (See page 6 for a list of center addresses and contact names.)

Today, Louisiana struggles with the affects of a rapidly vanishing coastline. Efforts to protect this valuable ecological resource include the Louisiana Coastal Wetlands Conservation Plan (no net loss of wetlands due to development) and the Coast 2050 Ecosystem Plan.

New Data on State's Elevations Needed

NOAA's National Geodetic Survey Director Charlie Challstrom hopes to help address Louisiana's problem of not knowing or having accurate land elevations.

In a report to Congress made last month, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) recommended the re-establishment of Louisiana's surveying benchmarks through a collaboration with LSU's Louisiana Spatial Reference Center and other partners. "We found that the state of Louisiana has a very significant problem in knowing the true elevations of its coast and of the state in general," said Challstrom. "The subsidence of land... has made it difficult to determine true vertical elevations of its cities, towns, ports and coastal wetlands."

Because the benchmarks are off, professional surveyors cannot take reliable readings for elevation, especially in the coastal areas of the state, said J. Anthony Cavell, president of the Louisiana Society of Professional Surveyors.

"Our problems with maintaining an accurate elevation system are directly related to the geological processes that are causing our coast to sink and become submerged," said Roy Dokka, professor of civil and environmental engineering and director of the Spatial Reference Center. "Saving and restoring Louisiana's nationally important coastal wetlands is dependent on

knowing the elevations of the wetlands with respect to sea level and how the rates of sinking vary across the region each year.

To address this serious problem, NOAA and LSU have joined forces to bring state-of-the-art positioning technology to Louisiana through the creation of the Louisiana Spatial Reference Center. Accurate elevations have an impact on public safety and on economic development.

NOAA and LSU, the US Army Corps of Engineers/New Orleans District, and the Louisiana Society of Professional Surveyors have begun to build a system to provide the correct elevations within each parish of the state. Presently, daily vertical and horizontal positioning data can be provided to the surveying and engineering community by three reference stations. Eighteen additional stations covering the entire state will come online in 2003.

The report to Congress on this topic and the executive summary are available at the Louisiana Society of Professional Surveyors website, www.lspns.net.

(Editor's note: This article was taken from a news release published by LSU Media Relations, Office of University Relations on May 17, 2002.)



What Citizens Should Know About Wetlands

By: Robert Flournoy, Ph.D.
Environmental Consultant, Ruston, LA
rwf@cox-internet.com

Wetlands are defined as those areas inundated or saturated by surface or ground water at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in water-saturated soil conditions.

Wetlands are areas covered by water or have waterlogged soils for long periods during the growing season. Wetlands generally include swamps, marshes, bogs and similar areas, but can be mostly "dry" areas where soil and vegetation determine the distinction.

Developers, both home-builders and commercial builders, need to take note: developments on land bigger than ½ acre should have a wetland determination by a qualified wetland specialist.

If the property is determined a wetland, then before construction begins, a US Army Corps of Engineers' Permit 404 must be obtained. Corps offices in Vicksburg, MS and New Orleans keep a list of professionals qualified to make this determination, usually a biologist trained in botany.

Since we have so many areas in Louisiana with water, it is a good idea to have a determination.

So before embarking on new construction on property, be safe and secure by getting a professional opinion on whether it's a wetland.

Follow through with the 404 Permit. That process can take months to complete, but is better than facing the consequences of ignoring the possibility of a wetland.

About wetlands: Is the activity in the Coastal Zone?

The state's permitting process was established in accordance with the Louisiana Coastal Resources Program. This program operates to assure that development in the coastal zone is accomplished with the greatest benefit and the least amount of damage. The coastal use permitting program is not limited to wetland and water habitats but also includes uses which affect cheniers, dunes, and other elevated land forms.

Applying for a Coastal Use Permit (CUP) also begins with completing the US Army Corps of Engineers' ENG Form 4345 permit application which can be obtained from the appropriate state government agency. Write or call:

Louisiana Department of Natural Resources
Coastal Management Division
LaSalle Office Building
617 North 3rd Street
Baton Rouge, LA
1-800-267-4019

To learn the steps involved in the CUP process and to review an application checklist, the following website is both convenient and informative: www.dnr.state.la.us/crm/coastmgt/cup/cup.ssi.



DU Holds Media Day for Duck-Wing Project



DNR Coastal Restoration Administrator Dr. Bill Good explains the Coast 2050 ecosystem plan to media and visitors at a recent ceremony in Cameron Parish.

A Louisiana Coastal Wetlands Terracing Project called the "Duck-Wing" project initiated by Ducks Unlimited in the East Cove Unit of Cameron Prairie National Wildlife Refuge was specifically designed to enhance waterfowl habitat. The project was seen during a field trip and media day held in Cameron Parish on June 5, 2002.

Twenty-seven linear miles of terraces were built in a Duck-Wing design on private and public lands. Terraces were built 1,000 feet long, 40 feet wide at its base and 10 feet wide at its top and planted with cord grass to stop erosion and ensure lon-

gevity of the newly planted vegetation. The terraces will provide increased aquatic vegetation and will serve as nesting sites for resident wildlife.

Ducks Unlimited managed the \$1.4 million project that included funding from Ducks Unlimited, Sweet Lake Land and Oil, Miami Corporation, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Louisiana Department of Natural Resources, Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, US Geological Survey, Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry and Cameron Parish Police Jury.

Right: Ducks Unlimited contractors are shown planting *Spartina alterniflora* or smooth cord grass near the edges of the terraces.



America's Wetland Campaign to help restoration plan

Val Marmillion of Pacific Visions (a communications firm based in California and Washington D.C.) has recently unveiled a national public awareness campaign that focuses on why Louisiana's land loss puts the rest of the nation at risk.

Calling it "*America's Wetland...the Campaign to Save Coastal Louisiana*" Marmillion, a native of Houma, was contracted by the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources to mobilize the campaign. He said the state needs to raise \$3 million over three years to implement the various components of the campaign that should reach people all

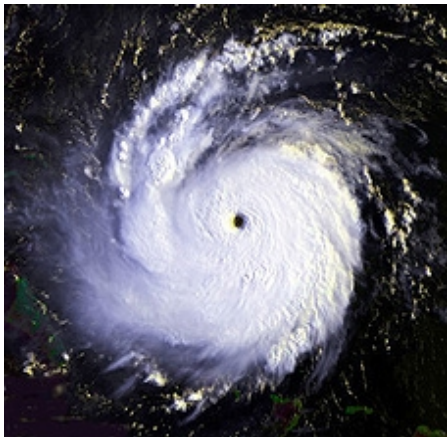
over the world.

The campaign messages will emphasize Louisiana's coastal wetlands as having world ecological significance as well as economic impacts to the rest of the nation. Marmillion said that support and federal assistance would bring the state's Coast 2050 Plan into action. Louisiana is at the heart of the country's energy supply, major transportation networks, and seafood supply.

Funds from the La. Conservation Council are expected to help launch the first phase of the campaign in the fall.



Average Hurricane Season Expected in 2002



This year's hurricane season, which begins June 1 and ends November 30, is now expected to have an average number of storms instead of an increased number as was earlier predicted. Hurricane forecaster William Gray of Colorado State University and his team revised their April advisory because of cooler Atlantic sea surfaces during the months of April and May.

Gray, an atmospheric scientist, reported on May 31st, there

would be eleven named storms, six hurricanes and two major hurricanes. Gray and his research colleagues predict a thirty five percent chance of a hurricane making landfall in the Gulf of Mexico coastal states.

The last seasonal forecast to be given by the hurricane team will be on August 7. This forecast will coincide with the most active part of hurricane season.

Coastal Use Permit (CUP) cost adjustments announced

Officials at the state Department of Natural Resources, Coastal Management Division (CMD) have recently announced a fee increase for Coastal Use Permits (CUPs), effective May 1, 2002.

According to Jim Rives, CMD Assistant Administrator, the new CUP fees only pertain to non-residential coastal use. The permit application fee for non-residential uses is now \$100. For residential use the fee will remain \$20, and the permit processing fee for uses involving dredging and/or filling will remain four cents per cubic yard.

The permit processing fee for non-residential uses involving dredging and/or filling increased from four cents to five cents per cubic yard with the following guidelines:

- minimum permit processing fees of \$25 will be assessed for use involving dredging and/or filling of less than 500 cubic yards.
- maximum permit processing fee allowed for non-residential uses involving dredg-

ing and/or filling is \$5,000 (The maximum permit processing fee allowed was \$2,000.)

For residential uses there are no processing fees assessed for uses involving less than 125 cubic yards of dredging and/or filling. The maximum permit processing fee will remain \$2,000.

The regulations define a residential coastal use as the construction or modification of one single-family, duplex, or triplex residence or camp. It also includes the construction or modification to any outbuilding, bulkhead, pier, or appurtenance on a lot on which there exists a single-family, duplex, or triplex residence or camp or on a water body which is immediately adjacent to such lot.

For more information about CUPs, contact Vickie Amedee or Bill Pittman of the Coastal Management Division at 1-800-267-4019.





Department of Natural Resources
P.O. Box 44487, Baton Rouge, LA
70804-4487

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State Wetland Permitting Offices

Coastal Permit Information Centers are now open in five parishes in south Louisiana. The La. Department of Natural Resources sponsored centers provide assistance with the process of applying for a permit and can be found at the following locations.

Cameron Parish

Cameron Parish Police Jury Office
110 Smith Circle, Cameron, LA
Contact: Tina Horn or Myles Hebert at 337-775-5718

Lafourche Parish

Lafourche Parish Council
101 West 112th Street, Cut Off, LA
Contact: Jess Curole at 985-632-4666

Jefferson Parish

Jefferson Parish Environmental &
Development Control Department
4901 Jefferson Hwy., Suite E, Jefferson, LA
Contact: Jason Smith at 504-731-4625

Plaquemines Parish

Plaquemines Parish Government
106 Ave. G, Belle Chase, LA
Contact: Victoria Caridas at 504-392-6690 ext. 1903

Terrebonne Parish

Terrebonne Parish Government
500 School Street, Houma, LA
Contact: James Miller at 985-580-8145
